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of: HUMES Donald Creig
 for: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FILTERING DATA RECEIVED BY A COMPUTER
 SYSTEM

Enclosed are the following:

- Specification, abstract and claims of 32 pages
- 05 sheets of formal drawings.
- Declaration signed by the named inventor(s)
- Letter: Identifying Inventor(s) for New Application
- Small Entity Statement
- Assignment Papers
- Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)
- Preliminary Amendment (reducing the filing fee)
- Information Disclosure Statement
- Other:

The filing fee is calculated below (after reduction for preliminary amendment if noted above).

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Respectfully submitted,

Date: Mar. 25, 1997

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SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FILTERING DATA RECEIVED BY A COMPUTER SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field Of The Invention

The present invention relates to a computer based system and method for filtering data received by a computer system and, in particular, to a computer based system and method for filtering text data from World Wide Web pages received by a computer system connected to the Internet.

2. Prior Art

While there are numerous benefits which accrue from the interconnection of computers or computer systems in a network, such an interconnection presents certain problems as well.

Broadly speaking, networks allow the various computers connected to the network to share information. Typically, if desired, access to certain information is restricted by providing access codes or the like to those individuals who are cleared to view or download the information. While this method of controlling access to information works fairly well for situations where each user is identifiable, it is very difficult to efficiently and effectively implement such a method in cases where there is a large number of unidentifiable users. Such is the situation with the vast interconnection of networks called the Internet.

The Internet is accessed by many millions of users every day and while it is somewhat possible to obtain some

information with respect to identifying the computers through which a particular user accesses the Internet, it very difficult, if not impossible, to identify a particular user beyond any self-identification provided by the user himself.

5 By far, most of the traffic on the Internet currently occurs on the World Wide Web. On the World Wide Web, both text and graphic information is typically provided on web pages and this information is transmitted via the Hyper Text Transfer Protocol ("HTTP"). A web page has a particular address associated with it called a Uniform Resource Locator ("URL").

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15 A typical user accesses the World Wide Web via a modem connection to a proxy/cache server which is connected to the Internet. A browser is the software program which runs on the user's computer (client computer) and allows the user to view web pages. To view a particular web page, the user inputs the URL of the desired web page into his or her browser. The browser sends the request to the proxy/cache server and the server sends the request over the Internet to the computer on which the web page resides. A header as well as a copy of the body of the web page is then sent back to the user's browser and displayed on the user's computer.

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25 While an incredible amount of information is available on the millions of web pages provided on the World Wide Web, some of this information is not appropriate for all users. In particular, although children can be exposed to a vast number

of educational and entertaining web pages, many other web pages include adult content which is not appropriate for access by children.

One method which is used to control access to these adult web pages is to require an access code to view or download particular web pages. Typically, this access code is obtained by providing some identification, often in the form of a credit card number. The obvious drawbacks of this method are:
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1) such a system will invariably deny or inhibit access to many adults as well as children because many adults do not want to, or may not be able to, provide a credit card number; and 2) the system is not fool-proof because children may obtain access to credit cards, whether their's or their parents'.
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Several services are available to parents and educators which provide a second method for preventing access to web pages containing adult content. These services provide software programs which contain a list of forbidden URLs. Service providers compile the list by searching the World Wide Web for web pages having objectionable material. When a user inputs a URL which appears on the forbidden list or "deny list," the program causes a message to be displayed indicating that access to that web page is forbidden. Although this method works well for denying access to web pages which are on the forbidden list, because thousands of web pages are being created and changed every day, it is simply impossible to
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provide an up-to-date list of every web page containing adult content. Therefore, these systems often allow children access to web pages which contain adult content but have not yet been added to the forbidden list.

A further drawback to the above-described access control systems is that they are simple admit/deny systems. That is, the user is either allowed to download and view the entire web page or he/she is forbidden from doing so. It is not practical, using either of these methods, to allow a particular user to download and view only the portions of the web page which are not objectionable.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art by providing a system and method for restricting access to objectionable or "target" data received by a computer over a network by filtering objectionable data from the data received. The present invention provides for filtering the data as received, so called "on the fly," so that a newly created web page may be filtered as accurately as one that has been predetermined to contain objectionable material.

Although the embodiments of the invention are described below with respect to a system and method for filtering objectionable data from the data received, it should be understood that the present invention can be applied to

process any type of target data from the data received. Thus, the present invention may be utilized to process desired data such that, for instance, only Web pages containing desired information are displayed on the user's computer.

5 In a preferred embodiment, the present invention provides a computer based method for filtering text data from World Wide Web pages which are received by a computer system connected to the Internet. Advantageously, the method of the present invention is carried out by the computer which acts as the proxy/server through which the user's computer is connected to the Internet. However, the method can be carried out by the user's computer as well.

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According to the method, if the web page requested by the user contains only a minimum of objectionable or target data, the user receives a portion of the filtered web page for downloading and viewing on his or her computer. While, if the web page requested contains a large amount of objectionable material, the invention will cause a "forbidden" page to be displayed on the user's computer monitor.

20 In the preferred embodiment, the request is sequentially filtered at three different levels, if necessary. First, the URL requested is filtered to determine if the web page associated with that URL has been pre-approved or pre-denied. If the URL has not be pre-approved or pre-denied, the header of the web page is then filtered to determine if the web page contains text data (such as HTML). If so, the body of the web

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page is filtered. While the filter will decide whether or not to block access to the entire web page based on the URL, depending on its processing of the body of the web page, the filter may deny access completely to the web page, deny access to certain portions of the web page (i.e., filter out some objectionable words), or allow complete access to the web page.

The method of the present invention first compares the requested URL to an "allow list" which contains URLs of web pages which have been approved for display to the user. If the requested URL is found in the allow list, the entire associated web page is, accordingly, forwarded to the user for downloading or viewing. If, however, the requested URL is not found in the allow list, the requested URL is then compared to a "deny list," (or "forbidden list") which functions in much the same manner as that of the prior art systems. If the requested URL is found in the forbidden list, a message is transmitted to the user's computer indicating that access to the web page is forbidden (hereinafter referred to as a "FORBIDDEN" page).

If the requested URL is found in neither the allow list or the deny list, and if the header indicates that the page contains text data, then the method provides for filtering the text of the web page, as it is either received from the network or read out of cache, to determine if it contains objectionable or target text. If the page contains

objectionable text, the method determines what kind of
objectionable text (specific words), how much objectionable
text, and the relative groupings of objectionable text.
Depending on the settings of predetermined parameters, certain
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objectionable words (if found) are either replaced with an
innocuous filler (such as "---") before the web page is
forwarded to the user's computer, or only a "FORBIDDEN" page
is forwarded to the user's computer. The settings of the
predetermined parameters may be modified by those having
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access to the computer program through which the computer
implements the program, such as the server operator or,
perhaps, the user's parent.

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Optional, the HTTP header of the web page is filtered
after the URL to determine if the page contains text data and,
if not, the method does not filter the web page body, since
the method for filtering the web page body is only capable of
filtering text or other recognizable data patterns. The
method provides for filtering the text of the web page by
comparing each "word" (defined by groupings of letter/number
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characters) in the web page to a "dictionary." The words in
the dictionary are periodically updated.

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Advantageously, each word in the dictionary has a number
of variables associated with it, such as: 1) a variable that
indicates whether the word, if found, should be replaced with
the innocuous filler (or a specific replacement filler word
may be indicated); 2) a variable that indicates what category

of objectionableness the word belongs to (i.e., pornography, intolerance, crime, job hunting, etc.); 3) a variable that indicates what language the word is a part of (i.e., english, french, spanish, etc.); 4) a base score variable that indicates how objectionable the word is; and 5) a bonus score variable that indicates whether the word is more objectionable when used in combination with other objectionable words. In this advantageous embodiment, the method provides for filtering the body of the web page by comparing each word in the web page with the words in the dictionary. If a word in the web page matches, then that word will either be replaced or not replaced with the filler, as indicated by the variable. A running score is determined for the entire web page, based on a particular algorithm, as the page is being filtered. If the final score for the page is above a predetermined threshold score, a "FORBIDDEN" page is forwarded to the user's computer instead.

The system of the present invention comprises a general purpose computer which is programmed to implement the method of the present invention. The computer of such a system is typically the proxy/cache server computer but it may also be the client computer or another computer.

While the preferred embodiment of the present invention is described in summary form above as applied to the filtering of web pages received over the Internet, it will be appreciated by one of ordinary skill in the art that this

method is also applicable to filtering of data received by a computer from any network, including an intranet. Further, in addition to reviewing HTTP information received from the Internet, the present invention may be applied to review information posted to forms-based pages such as search engines, surveys, guest books, etc. (POST/GET data). If the words or phrases would yield objectionable results, the invention will prevent posting of the data to the remote HTTP server.

Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will be set forth in, or will become apparent from, the detailed description of the preferred embodiments of the invention which follows.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows a block diagram of a preferred embodiment of the system of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a flowchart showing the broad steps of filtering a web page URL, header, and body in accordance with one embodiment of the method of the present invention.

Figure 3 is a flowchart showing the steps for filtering a URL request in accordance with the embodiment of **Figure 2**.

Figure 4 is a flowchart showing the steps for filtering a web page header in accordance with the embodiment of **Figure 2**.

Figure 5 is a flowchart showing the steps for filtering a web page body in accordance with the embodiment of **Figure 2**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Figure 1 shows a block diagram of a preferred embodiment of the system of the present invention. In this embodiment, a proxy/cache server computer 110 is connected to the Internet and is capable of receiving HTTP information over the World Wide Web. A client computer 120 (user's computer) is connected to the server computer 110, typically via an ethernet or modem connection. In accordance with the present invention, server computer 110 runs a computer program 112 which programs the server computer 110 to filter any request it receives for a web page from the client computer 120 and to output to the client computer 120 only those web pages, or portions of web pages, which are deemed appropriate for viewing by the user of the client computer 120. This filtering takes place in at least three stages, as is described below relative to Figures 2 through 5, which illustrate the method of the present invention.

Advantageously, the proxy/cache server 110 used in the system of the present invention is a SPARC workstation made by Sun Microsystems, Inc. and the server 110 is programmed to filter the requests in the Perl programming language. The inventors of the present invention have determined that a SPARC workstation programmed in accordance with the method set forth below, is capable of filtering at least approximately 90KB to 500KB of data per second, based on the speed of the CPU.

The flowchart in **Figure 2** shows the broad steps of filtering a requested web page URL, header, and body in accordance with one embodiment of the method of the present invention. The method begins at terminal block **210** and continues to block **212** where the user selected URL is input. The URL request is filtered at decision block **214** and the filter decision is "yes" if the request is denied based on the URL and "no" if the request is not denied at this point. If decision block **214** returns a "yes," block **216** shows that a page indicating access is forbidden ("FORBIDDEN" page) is to be returned, which page will be output to the client computer. If decision block **214** returns a "no," the HTTP header is input at block **218** and filtered at decision block **220**. If decision block **220** returns a "yes," block **222** shows that the "FORBIDDEN" page is to be returned and if decision block **220** returns a "no," the first portion of the body of the web page is input at block **224**.

Decision block **226** checks to see if the end of the page has been reached and, if so, the method returns to await another user selected URL. If the end of the page has not been reached, that portion of the body of the web page is filtered at decision block **228**. If decision block **228** returns a "yes" (objectionable material found), then that portion of the web page is modified and, if certain rules are met, it is later sent to the client computer, indicated at block **232**. If decision block **228** returns a "no," indicating no objectionable

material was found in that portion of the web page body, then control is returned to block **224** where the next portion of the web page body is input.

The filters indicated in decision blocks **214**, **220**, and **228** are shown in the flowcharts of **Figures 3, 4, and 5**, respectively. The filters shown in **Figures 3** and **5** are based on a method involving a dictionary, which dictionary can be updated periodically, and a score threshold for indicating whether or not a web page should be forbidden.

Each word or phrase in the dictionary has several variables associated with it. Together each word in the dictionary and its associated variables form an entry in the dictionary. In a preferred embodiment, each entry in the dictionary has the following format:

Target:Replace:Category:Language:BaseScore:BonusScore
where "Target" is the objectionable or target word. "Replace" indicates whether or not the word or phrase should be replaced in the text if it is found (R = replace, N = not replace). "Category" is the category the word belongs to (e.g., pornography, intolerance, crime, violence, etc.), and "Language" is the language the word belongs to (e.g., english, french, spanish, etc.). "BaseScore" is the score the word contributes to the total score of the web page body, or portion thereof, if it is found and "BonusScore" is the additional score the word contributes to the total score if it is found in close proximity to other objectionable words. A

word may be assigned a negative score, which would subtract from the total score instead of adding to it.

In the preferred embodiment, the default threshold score at which a web page will be forbidden is 50, although this score can readily be changed by anyone having the required access.

Examples of possible words and associated variables in the dictionary are as follows.

nude:N:pornography:english:5:5

This entry would be for the word "nude." "Nude," if found would not be replaced in the text (N); it is in the pornography category; it is in the english language; it has a score of 5; and it contributes a bonus score of 5 if found with other words in the dictionary.

hot:N:none:english:0:5

This entry, for the word "hot," is not to be replaced if found; is in no particular category; is in the english language; has no score; and has a bonus score of 5.

The flowchart of **Figure 3** shows the portion of the method which is represented by decision block **214** in **Figure 2**, showing filtering of the URL request. This portion of the method begins at terminal block **310** and in block **312** a variable called "filter" is turned on and a variable called "score" is set to zero. The "filter" variable is used to later indicate whether the header or body of the web page should be filtered (on) or not filtered (off). "Score" is the

variable which keeps track of the total score of the URL being filtered.

Decision block **314** asks whether the requested URL is in the Local-Allow list, which is a list of URLs associated with web pages that have been pre-approved so that they do not need to be filtered. In addition to speeding up transmission by allowing the request to be passed without filtering the web page, the Local-Allow list also provides for allowing full access to web pages which have text that would normally be filtered. This may prove advantageous, for instance, if a web page discusses certain objectionable text in a manner to educate children about its effects.

If the URL is in the Local-Allow list, the Filter variable is set to "Off" in block **316** and a "No" is returned in terminal block **318**. If the URL is not in the Local-Allow list, decision block **320** checks to see if the URL is in the Deny List. The Deny List is a listing of URLs associated with web pages which have been predetermined to be objectionable. If the URL is in this list, terminal block **322** returns a "Yes." This Deny List feature is advantageous *inter alia* for designating web pages which may contain objectionable material other than text which may be filtered, such as objectionable pictures.

If the URL is not in the Deny List, the individual words in the URL and POST/GET data are then filtered. Block **324** indicates that the variable "Word" is set to the first word in

the request. Decision block **326** checks to see if the last word in the request has already been filtered and, if so, decision block

5 **328** determines whether the "Score" of the request at this point is greater than the predetermined threshold "Targetscore," which threshold may, advantageously, be changed by one having the appropriate access. If the "Score" variable is not greater than the "Targetscore" threshold, then terminal block **332** returns a "No," indicating that the page should not
10 be forbidden. If the "Score" variable is greater than the "Targetscore" threshold, then terminal block **330** returns a "Yes," indicating the page should be forbidden. If decision block **326** indicates that the last word in the request has not already been filtered, then decision block **334** compares "Word" against the dictionary. If "Word" does not match an entry in the dictionary, then "Word" is set to the next word in the request and decision block **326** again checks to see if the last word has been filtered. If "Word" does match an entry in the dictionary, then decision block **338** determines
20 whether "Word" has content, that is, is the category variable not set to "none" or, alternatively is the category variable set to a particular category of interest (for instance, "pornography"). If "Word" does not have content (category = none), then, in block **340**, "Word" is again set to the next word in the request and, if "Word" does have content (category ≠ "none" or category = a particular category), "Score" is set
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to the previous value of "Score" plus the base score of the word and "Word" is then set to the next word in the request. Control returns to decision block **326**.

The filtering method for the header of the web page, indicated at decision block **220** of **Figure 2**, is shown in detail in **Figure 4**. This method essentially determines if the page is in text (such as HTML) such that it may be effectively reviewed by the filter.

The method begins at terminal block **410** and decision block **412** determines whether the "Filter" variable is set to "On." If the "Filter" variable is not set to "On," indicating that the header should not be filtered, then terminal block **414** returns a "No." If the "Filter" variable is set to "On," then decision block **416** determines whether the page contains text data and, if so, the "Score" variable is set to zero and the "Found" variable is set to Null at block **418**, and terminal block **420** returns a "No," indicating the page should not be forbidden based on the header. If decision block **416** determines that the page does not contain text data, then the "Filter" variable is set to "Off" in block **422** and terminal block **424** returns a "No."

The filtering method for the body of the web page, uses the dictionary and the variables described above, however this method introduces new variables as well which enable it to consider the proximity of the objectionable words to each other, as well as other factors, in deciding whether or not to

deny access to the page.

In this method, the body of the web page is filtered one word at a time. When a word is found which is in the dictionary, a "Chain" is started. Succeeding sequential words that are found in the dictionary are included in the "Chain" and the "Chain" is ended when two words in a row are not found in the dictionary. Accordingly, these last two words are not part of the "Chain". Thus, the determination of the "Chain" length is controlled by a "Proximity" variable.

After a "Chain" is formed, it is scored. To score a "Chain," all the base scores for each word in the "Chain" are added together. The bonus scores for each word are added to the total as well, if the "Chain" contains more than one word in the dictionary. If any of the words in the "Chain" have content, i.e., category not set to "none" or category set to a particular category, then the "Chain's" score is added to the total score for the page. Advantageously, a total score is kept for each category and specific thresholds are set for each category.

If the "Replace" variable for any of the words is "R," indicating replace, then the word is replaced with an innocuous word or symbol (e.g., "----"). Advantageously, the "Replace" variable for each word in the dictionary may instead be an alternate word which is used to replace the objectionable word, e.g., "darn" for "damn". Such replacement words may be displayed in an alternate color.

If the total score for the page exceeds the predetermined threshold, e.g., 50, then the entire page is replaced with a "FORBIDDEN" page. In an advantageous embodiment, only words in the same language are scored together and separate thresholds are predetermined for each category.

5 Optionally, the "FORBIDDEN" page provides additional information, such as the total score for the page, the score of the page in each category, the language of the objectionable words in the page, etc. This information may be
10 viewed and the thresholds may be changed by one having the appropriate access, for instance, a parent or teacher.

The examples below illustrate how the scoring of a "Chain" is accomplished.

Sample Dictionary

15 hot:N:none:english:0:5
 fantasy:N:none:english:0:5
 pictures:N:none:english:0:5
 nude:N:pornography:english:5:5
 sexual:N:pornography:english:5:5
20 harassment:N:none:english:0:-10

<u>Sample "Chain"</u>	<u>Score</u>
sexual fantasy	15 (sexual has content and multiple words from the dictionary are in the "Chain" so bonus scores count. 5+5 from "sexual" and 5 from "fantasy")
30 sexual harassment	0 (sexual has content and

			multiple words are in the "Chain", so bonus scores count. 5+5 from "sexual" and -10 from "harassment")
5	pictures	0	("pictures" has no content)
10	hot pictures	0	(neither "hot" or "pictures" has content)
15	nude	5	("nude" has content, but only one word in "Chain", so only the base score applies)
20	hot nude pictures	20	(3 words in "Chain", 1 with content, all base and bonus scores apply)

One embodiment of the filtering method for the body of the web page, indicated at decision block **228** of **Figure 2**, is shown in detail in **Figure 5**. This method uses a "Proximity" variable to indicate whether a word found to be in the dictionary is within two words of the last word found to be in the dictionary, such that it should be part of the same "Chain." Also, a "Found" list is used to keep track of all the objectionable words found which should be replaced if the web page is to be displayed. Additionally, a "Tempchain" variable allows the method to determine if the next two sequential words are actually in the dictionary before they are added to the "Chain."

The method is begun at terminal block **510** and decision block **512** determines whether the "Filter" variable is set to "On." If not (indicating that the body of the web page should

not be filtered), terminal block **514** returns a "No." If
"Filter" is "On," then "Word" is set to the first word in the
page at block **516**. Decision block **518** determines whether the
last word in the page has already been filtered and, if it
has, block **520** indicates that all the words in the "Found"
list are replaced with the replace word (e.g., "----").
Decision block **522** determines whether the "Score" for the page
exceeds the predetermined "Targetscore" threshold and, if so,
the page is replaced with the "FORBIDDEN" page in block **526**
before a "Yes" is returned by terminal block **528**, indicating
that access was denied based on the web page body. If the
score does not exceed the "Targetscore" threshold, a "No" is
returned at terminal block **524**.

If decision block **518** determines that the last word in
the page has not been filtered, then decision block **530** is
invoked to determine if "Word" is in the dictionary. If so,
"Tempchain" is added to "Chain" along with "Word" and the
"Proximity" variable is set to 1, in block **532**. Block **534**
then sets "Word" to the next word on the page. If "Word" is
not in the dictionary, then decision block **536** checks to see
if "Chain" is null (i.e., contains no words) and, if it is,
block **534** sets "Word" to the next word on the page. If
"Chain" is not null, decision block **538** determines if
"Proximity" is greater than zero. If "Proximity" is greater
than zero, indicating that the last word was in the
dictionary, then 1 is subtracted from "Proximity" and "Word"

is added to "Tempchain" in block **540**. Block **534** then sets "Word" to the next word on the page. If "Proximity" is not greater than zero, then this indicates that the last two words were not in the dictionary and thus, the "Chain" is ended.

5 The next portion of the method scores the "Chain."

In block **542**, "Word" is set to the first word in the "Chain." If that is not the last word in the "Chain," as determined in decision block 544, then decision block **546** determines whether "Word" is replaceable. If yes, then "Word" is added to the "Found" list in block 550 and control is sent to block **548**. If "Word" is not replaceable, then control is sent directly to block **548**. Block **548** sets: "Base Score" to the previous "Base Score" plus the "Word's" base score; "Bonus Score" to the previous "Bonus Score" plus the "Word's" bonus score; "Content" to "Yes" if the "Word" has content; and "Word" to the next word in the "Chain". Block **544** then again determines if the "Word" is the last word in the "Chain".

If "Word" is the last word in the "Chain", then decision block **552** determines if "Content" is set to "yes." If so, then block **554** sets "Score" to the previous "Score" plus the "Bonus Score" and "Base Score," as last determined in block **548**. Control is then sent to block **556**. If "Content" is not set to "yes," then block **556** sets: "Chain" to null; "Tempchain" to null; "Proximity" to zero; "Bonus Score" to zero, "Base Score" to zero; and "Content" to "No." Block **534** then sets "Word" to the next word on the page.

One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the methods shown in the flowcharts of **Figures 2** through **5** can readily be programmed into a computer using any of several computer programming languages. Advantageously, the method shown in **Figure 2** serves as the main loop of the program and the methods shown in **Figures 3** through **5** serve as subroutines. The normal attendant initialization of variables, error checking, and the like, is programmed as required.

As noted above, while the system and method of the invention have been described with relation to filtering objectionable data from data received, the method can also be used to process data such that only Web pages containing desired data are passed to the user's computer.

Although the invention has been described in detail with respect to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that variations and modifications can be effected in these embodiments without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

We claim:

1. A computer readable memory containing a computer program for programming a general purpose computer to perform a method for filtering a block of text data containing words received over a network, wherein said method comprises the steps of:

- a) providing a listing of target words;
- b) comparing each word in said block of text data to said listing to determine any word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and
- c) replacing at least one word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing with a replacement-word to provide a new block of text data.

2. A computer readable memory as in claim 1, further comprising:

providing a respective replace-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said replace-variable being set to either a true state or a false state; and

replacing each said word in said block of text data that matches one of said target words in said listing having its respective replace-variable set to a true state with a replacement-word to provide a new block of text data.

3. A computer readable memory as in claim 1, further comprising:

providing a respective score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said score-variable having a numerical value;

determining a total score for said block of text data based on the respective score-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and

replacing said new block of text data with a substitute block of data if said total score for said block of text data exceeds a predetermined numerical threshold.

4. A computer readable memory as in claim 3, further comprising providing a respective bonus score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said bonus score-variable having a numerical value, wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined based also on the respective bonus score-variable associated with at least one word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing.

5. A computer readable memory as in claim 4, wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined based also on the proximity of each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing to

another word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing.

6. A computer based method for filtering a block of text data containing words received over a network, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a listing of target words;
- b) comparing each word in said block of text data to said listing to determine any word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and
- c) replacing at least one word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing with a replacement-word to provide a new block of text data.

7. A computer based method as in claim 6, further comprising:

providing a respective replace-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said replace-variable being set to either a true state or a false state; and

replacing each said word in said block of text data that matches one of said target words in said listing having its respective replace-variable set to a true state with a replacement-word, to provide a new block of text data.

8. A computer based method as in claim 6, further

comprising:

providing a respective score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said score-variable having a numerical value;

determining a total score for said block of text data based on the respective score-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and

replacing said new block of text data with a substitute block of data if said total score for said block of text data exceeds a predetermined numerical threshold.

9. A computer based method as in claim 8, wherein said method further comprises providing a respective bonus score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said bonus score-variable having a numerical value, and wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined based also on the respective bonus score-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing.

10. A computer based method in claim 9, wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined also based on the proximity of each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing to another word in said block of text data which matches one of

said target words in said listing.

11. A computer based method for filtering a web page received over the World Wide Web and providing an output, said web page having a header portion, a body portion and an associated requested URL, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) providing an allow-list of URLs associated with approved web pages;
- b) providing a deny-list of URLs associated with disapproved web pages;
- c) providing a listing of target words;
- d) comparing said requested URL with said URLs in said allow-list, and if said requested URL matches any of said URLs in said allow-list, providing the web page as an output;
- e) if said requested URL does not match any of said URLs in said allow-list, comparing said requested URL with said URLs in said deny-list, and, if said requested URL matches any of said URLs in said deny-list, providing an output indicating access to the web page is forbidden;
- f) if said requested URL does not match any of said URLs in said deny-list, providing a computer based filter for comparing each word in the header of the web page to said listing to determine any word in the header of the web page which matches one of said target words in said listing; and
- g) providing an indication that access to the web page is forbidden or a modified version of the web page as an output

if a word in the header of the web page matches one of said target words in said listing.

12. A computer based method as in claim 11, further comprising:

providing a computer based filter for comparing each word in the body of the web page to said listing to determine any word in the body of the web page which matches one of said target words in said listing; and

providing an indication that access to the web page is forbidden or a modified version of the web page as an output if a word in the body of the web page matches one of said target words in said listing.

13. A computer system for filtering a block of text data containing words received over a network, comprising:

a general purpose computer; and

a set of instructions for programming said general purpose computer to:

- a) provide a listing of target words;
- b) compare each word in said block of text data to said listing to determine a word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and
- c) replace a word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing with a replacement-word to provide a new block of text data.

14. A computer system as in claim 13, wherein said general purpose computer is further programmed in step c to:

provide a respective replace-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said replace-variable being set to either a true state or a false state; and

replace each said word in said block of text data that matches one of said target words in said listing having its respective replace-variable set to a true state with a replacement-word to provide a new block of text data.

15. A computer system as in claim 13, wherein said general purpose computer is further programmed to:

provide a respective score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said score-variable having a numerical value;

determine a total score for said block of text data based on the respective score-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and

replace said new block of text data with a substitute block of data if said total score for said block of text data exceeds a predetermined numerical threshold.

16. A computer system as in claim 15, wherein said general purpose computer is further programmed to provide a

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respective bonus score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said bonus score-variable having a numerical value, and wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined based also on the respective bonus score-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing.

17. A computer system as in claim 15, wherein said total score for said block of text data is determined based also on the proximity of each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing to another word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing.

18. A computer based method for filtering a block of text data containing words received over a network, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a listing of target words;
- b) providing a respective category-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing for expressing a category with which each of said target words in said listing is associated;
- c) comparing each word in said block of text data to said listing to determine any word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing; and

c) providing an output comprising a record of the respective categories with which each target word in said listing which matches a word in said block of text data is associated.

19. A computer based method as in claim 18, further comprising:

providing a respective score-variable associated with each of said target words in said listing, each said score-variable having a numerical value;

determining a total category score for said block of text data based on the respective score-variable and category-variable associated with each word in said block of text data which matches one of said target words in said listing;

providing said total category score for each category in said output.

20. A computer based method as in claim 19, further comprising:

replacing said block of text data with a substitute block of data if said total category score for a category exceeds a predetermined numerical threshold.

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a system and method for restricting access to data received by a computer over a network by filtering certain data from the data received. In a preferred embodiment, the present invention provides a computer based method for filtering objectionable or target text data from World Wide Web pages which are received by a computer system connected to the Internet. According to the method, if the web page requested by the user contains only a minimum of objectionable or target data, the user may receive a portion of the filtered web page for downloading and viewing on his or her computer. If the web page requested contains a large amount of objectionable or target data, the invention will cause a "forbidden" page to be displayed on the user's computer monitor.

**VERIFIED STATEMENT CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS
(37 CFR 1.9(f) & 1.27(c))--SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN**

Docket Number (Optional)

*C-174128*Applicant or Patentee: Donald Creig Humes

Serial or Patent No.: _____

Filed or Issued: _____

Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FILTERING DATA
RECEIVED BY A COMPUTER SYSTEM

I hereby declare that I am

the owner of the small business concern identified below:
 an official of the small business concern empowered to act on behalf of the concern identified below:

NAME OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN Unified Research Laboratories
 ADDRESS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN 303 Butler Farm, Suite 106
Hampton, VA 23666

I hereby declare that the above identified small business concern qualifies as a small business concern as defined in 37 CFR 121.12, and reproduced in 37 CFR 1.9(d), for purposes of paying reduced fees to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, in that the number of employees of the concern, including those of its affiliates, does not exceed 500 persons. For purposes of this statement, (1) the number of employees of the business concern is the average over the previous fiscal year of the concern of the persons employed on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis during each of the pay periods of the fiscal year, and (2) concerns are affiliates of each other when either, directly or indirectly, one concern controls or has the power to control the other, or a third party or parties controls or has the power to control both.

I hereby declare that rights under contract or law have been conveyed to and remain with the small business concern identified above with regard to the invention described in:

the specification filed herewith with title as listed above.
 the application identified above.
 the patent identified above.

If the rights held by the above identified small business concern are not exclusive, each individual, concern or organization having rights in the invention must file separate verified statements averring to their status as small entities, and no rights to the invention are held by any person, other than the inventor, who would not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person made the invention, or by any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d), or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern or organization having any rights in the invention is listed below:
 no such person, concern, or organization exists.
 each such person, concern or organization is listed below.

Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

NAME OF PERSON SIGNING Gary P WarrenTITLE OF PERSON IF OTHER THAN OWNER President/CEOADDRESS OF PERSON SIGNING 303 Butler Farm Road Ste 106 Hampton VA 23666SIGNATURE Gary P Warren DATE March 11, 1997

DECLARATION FOR USA PATENT APPLICATION

(including Design and National Stage PCT)

Attorney's Docket ID:

OP428W0

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below adjacent to my name. I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought

on the invention entitled SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FILTERING DATA RECEIVED BY A COMPUTER SYSTEM, the specification of which

is attached hereto. (or)

was filed on _____, [] and was amended on _____.

[] as U.S. Application No. _____ (or)

[] as International PCT Application No. _____

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above. I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 (a) - (d) or §365 (b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or §365 (a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, where priority is not claimed, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or any PCT International application, having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s) (ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS IDENTIFIED ON ATTACHED SHEET):

Number	Country	Day/Month/Year Filed	Priority Not Claimed

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s), or §365(c) of any PCT International application designating the U.S., listed below; and insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application. (ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS IDENTIFIED ON ATTACHED SHEET.)

Application Serial No.	Day/Month/Year Filed	Status -- patented, pending, abandoned

I hereby appoint the practitioners of **LARSON AND TAYLOR** associated with the Customer Number provided below to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, and direct that all correspondence be addressed to that Customer Number.

CUSTOMER NUMBER: 00881

Direct all telephone calls to Kevin R. Klein at TEL (703) 920-7200 (Fax: 703-892-8428)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under § 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full Name of Sole or First Inventor	Donald Creig Humes	Citizenship	U.S.
--	--------------------	-------------	------

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SIGN AND
DATE HERE: Donald Creig Humes Date: 3-24-97

Full Name of Second Joint Inventor, if any	Citizenship
---	-------------

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(if different from P.O. address)

SIGN AND
DATE HERE: Inventor's Signature: Date:

Full Name of Third Joint Inventor, if any	Citizenship
--	-------------

Full Post Office Address

Residence - City, State/Country
(if different from P.O. address)

SIGN AND
DATE HERE: Inventor's Signature: Date:

Full Name of Fourth Joint Inventor, if any	Citizenship
---	-------------

Full Post Office Address

Residence - City, State/Country
(if different from P.O. address)

SIGN AND
DATE HERE: Inventor's Signature: Date:

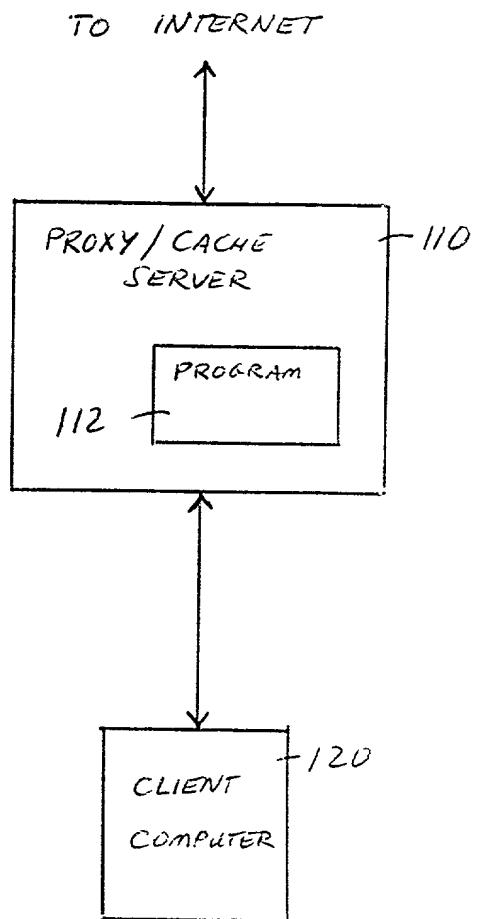


FIGURE 1

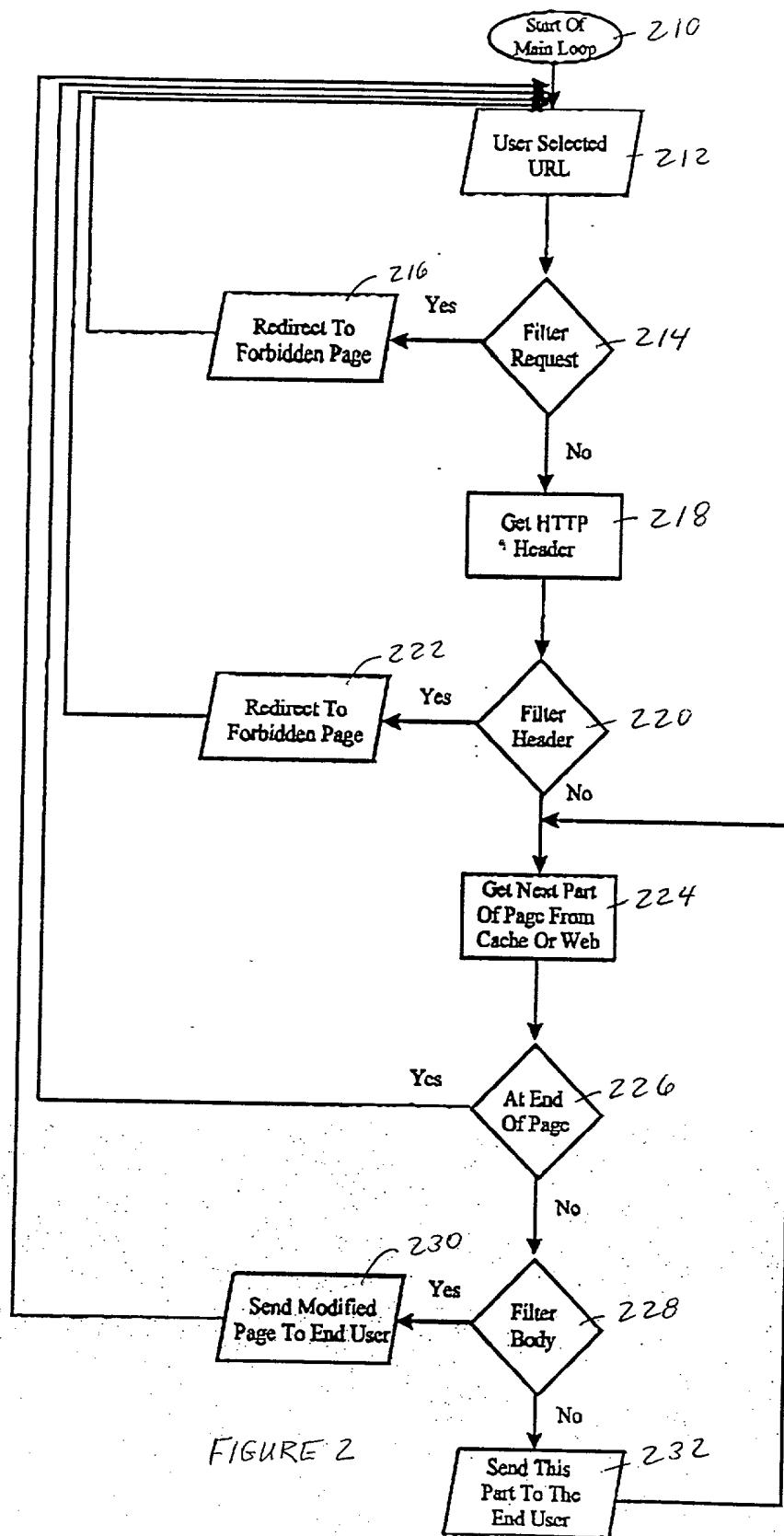
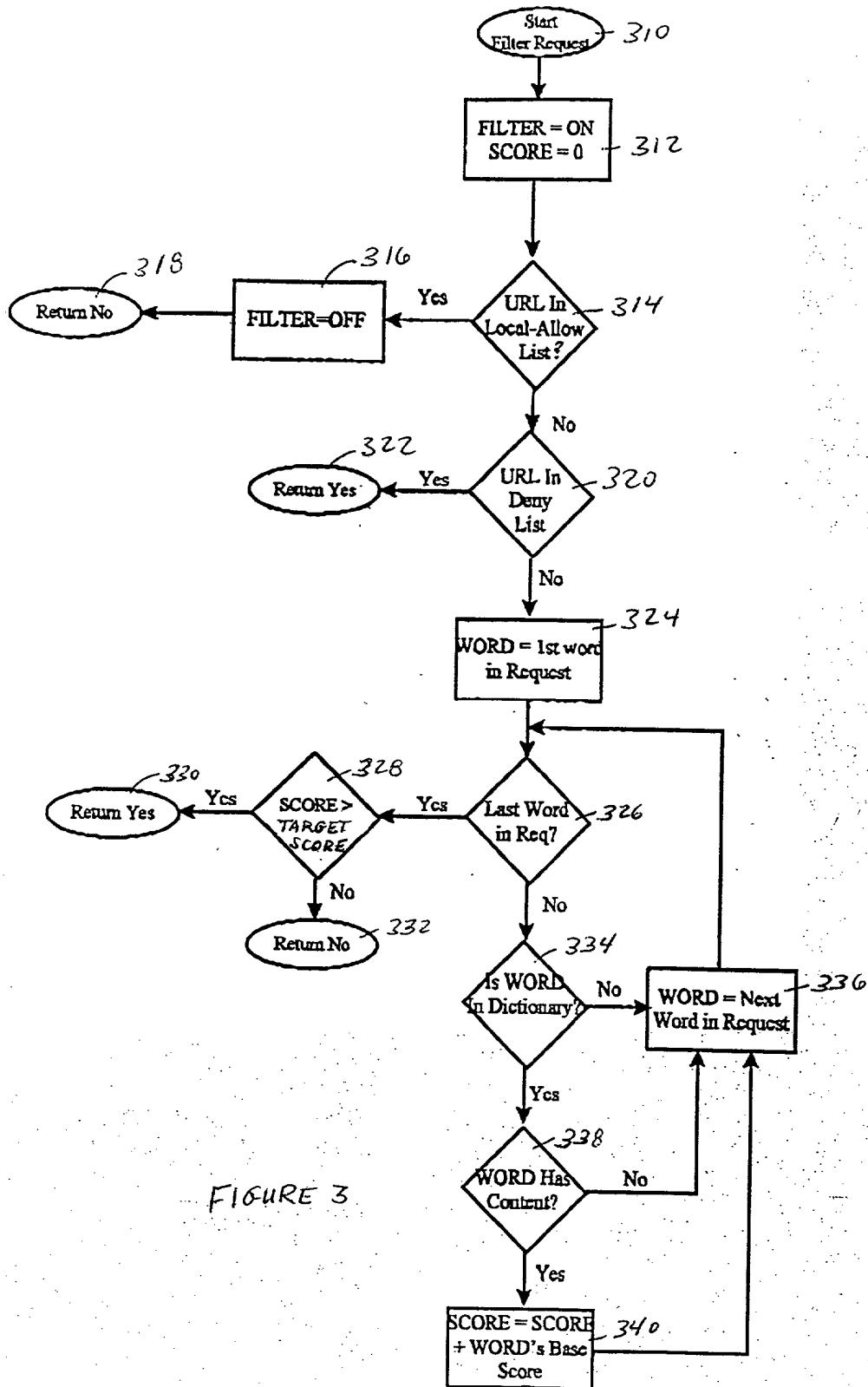


FIGURE 2



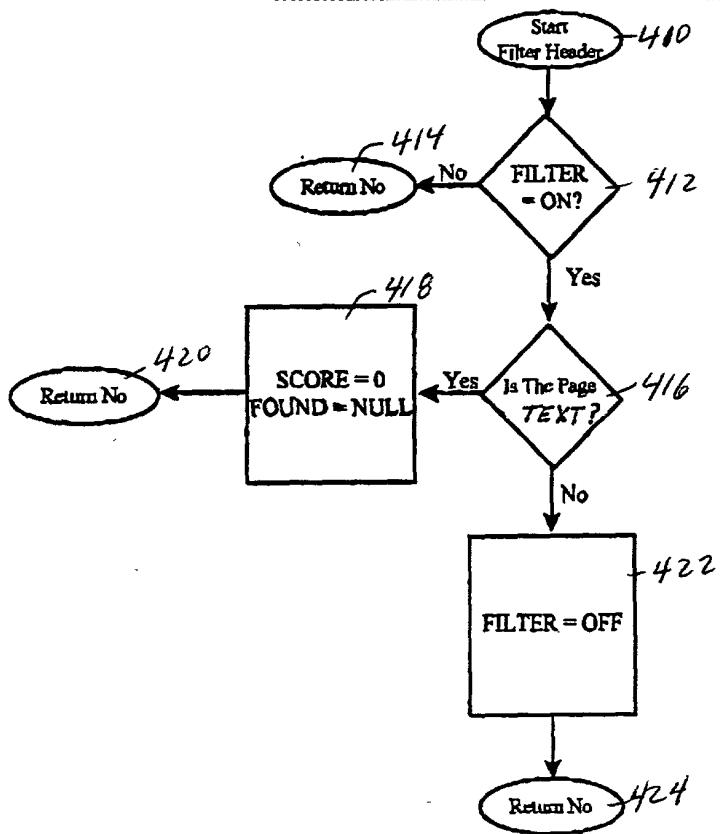


FIGURE 4

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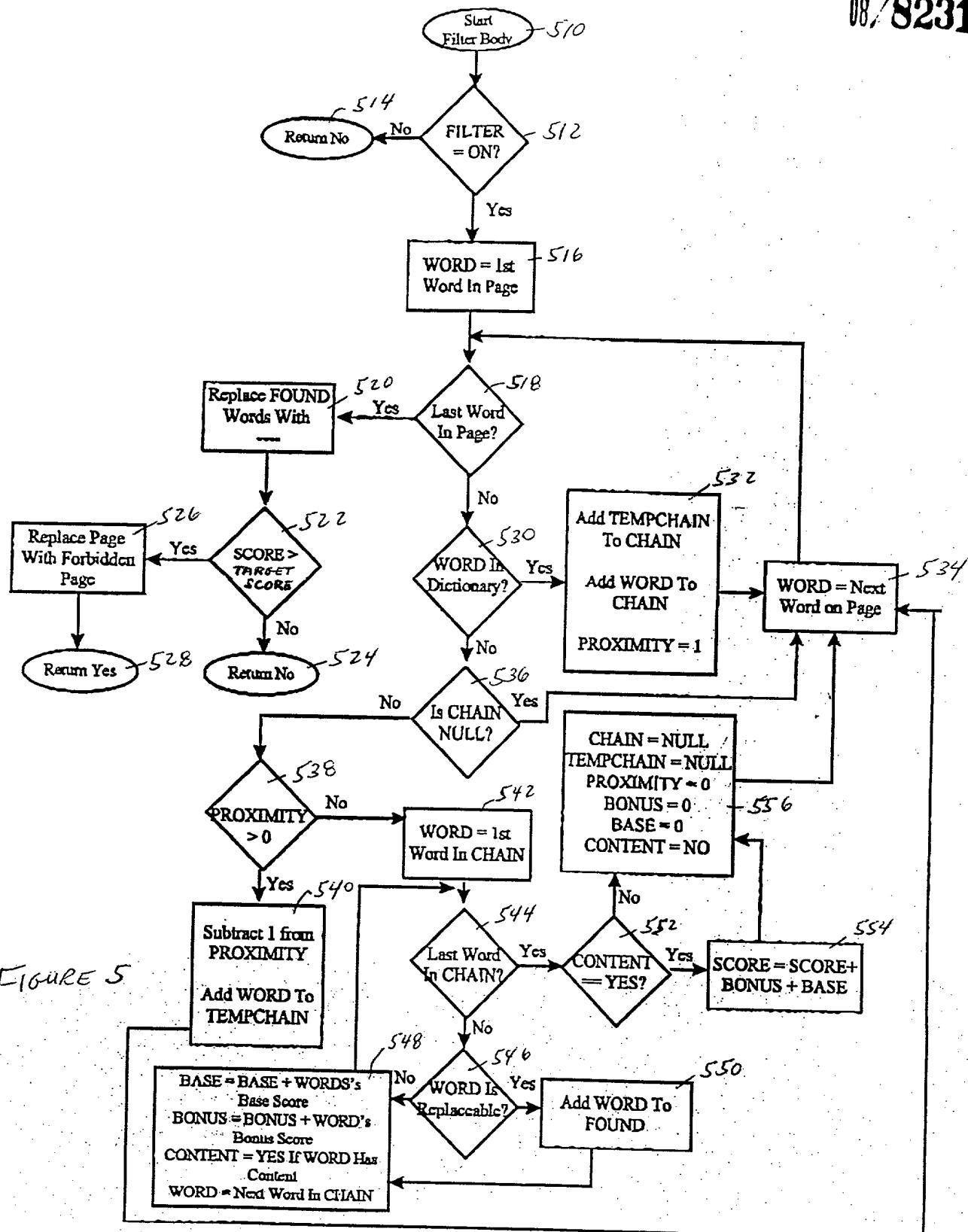


FIGURE 5